

Return to McArthur gives Blazers fond memories

A mixed bag of emotions return for pros who played in The Pit as collegians

By Mindi Rice
Senior Sports Reporter

For most basketball teams, a scheduled trip to McArthur Court is synonymous with intimidation.

For the Portland Trail Blazers, Thursday night's game against the Sacramento Kings at Mac Court was a two-hour trip to a small home arena.

"This was our home crowd," Portland head coach Maurice Cheeks said. "We've been used to playing out on the road, so we're getting better and getting more accustomed to it every time we play."

The trip to McArthur Court brought out memories for many of the Trail Blazers, whether or not they played at the cozy gym in college.

"It kind of reminded me of my high school gym, kind of a field house-type atmosphere," guard Bonzi Wells said. "You've got the fans really going crazy out here."

While it was the first time playing in Mac Court for Wells and many of his teammates, three Blazers had previous experiences in the Ducks' home arena.

"It's been a while (since I've been here)," former Bruin Tracy Murray said. "My last year as a junior and then my first year as a Blazer — that's the last time I was here. This has always been a very good arena to shoot the ball in. It's a shooters arena."

Murray scored 14 points, grabbed one steal and posted two blocks.

"I've always enjoyed coming in here," Murray said. "I enjoy the atmosphere."

Along with Murray, two of his teammates — former Duck David Jackson and former Wildcat Damon Stoudamire — also spent some of their Pacific-10 Conference days in Eugene.

Stoudamire has been gone nine years, graduating from Arizona in 1995. Jackson's last year playing in Mac Court was 2001, while Murray played his last game in Eugene in 1993.

"It was cool but it wasn't the same," Stoudamire said. "This is preseason and last time I was out here playing it was for something a little more significant."

The last time Stoudamire played in Mac Court was a 97-76 Arizona win against the Ducks. The Wildcats finished second in the nation his final collegiate season.

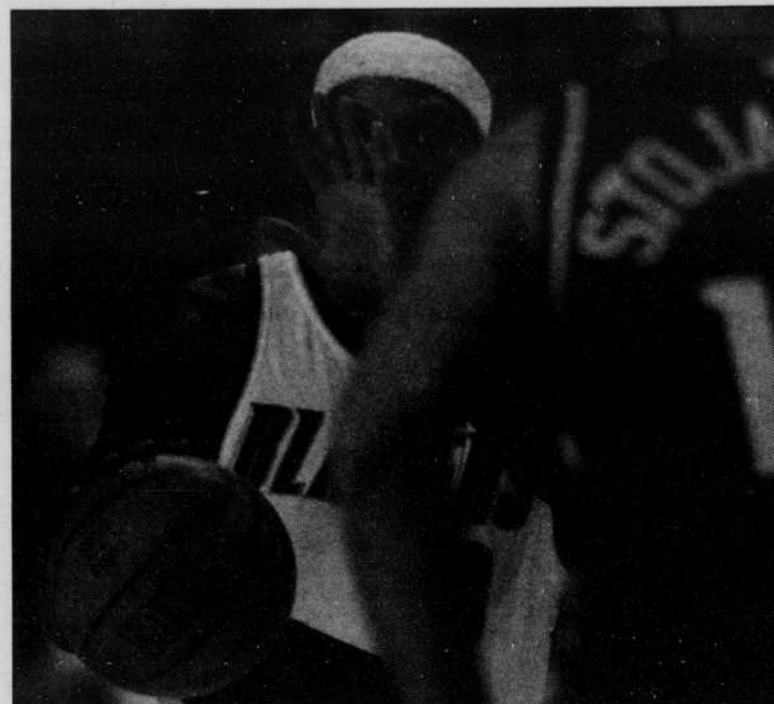
"I like Mac Court," Stoudamire said. "It's definitely a nice gym. It's one of the best arenas in the country in terms of college basketball. The crowd is always very supportive for Oregon. It's always been one of the better places to play."

The only Blazer who didn't speak highly of Mac Court was former North Carolina standout Jeff McInnis.

"The court was good but the building was kind of raggedy," McInnis said.

McInnis fouled out of the game in the fourth quarter after scoring eight points.

The two-hour trip allotted the Blazers a chance to play in front of fans that don't often get to make the trip to Port-



Mark McCambridge Photographer

Guard Bonzi Wells led the Blazers with 20 points on 6 of 12 shooting.

land. For the team, that just added to the excitement of a game at Mac Court.

"It is intimidating for the visiting team because the crowd is right on

top of you," Cheeks said.

Contact the senior sports reporter at mindirice@dailyemerald.com.

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Oregon, Oregon State prepare for soccer's version of Civil War

Oregon begins conference play against its inner-state rival and seeks its first win against OSU since 1999

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Reporter

This weekend's game is the pinnacle contest of the season for Oregon.

"This is just our most important game of the season," sophomore midfielder Carlie Ashcraft said.

It's the one chance every year where Oregon (6-5) and Oregon State (4-6-1) wage war: Civil War, that is. The Oregon

women's soccer team heads to Corvallis today for a 3 p.m. game.

For Ashcraft and redshirt sophomore Dominique Lainez, the game has even more importance. Neither one has been with the Ducks in a season where they defeated the Beavers.

Last year, the Ducks lost 2-1 at Papé Field and lost again in 2001, 4-1, in Corvallis. The Ducks have not won outright since their 4-0 victory in Corvallis in 1999. The teams tied in 2000 with two.

"It's about time that we come back and kick their butts," Lainez said. "They shouldn't have beaten us, they're not a better team than us at all. We're ready to come out and prove to them we are the better team in Oregon."

Oregon heads to Corvallis after a split weekend at Papé Field. The Ducks suffered a 1-0 loss to defending

national champion Portland on Friday, which was the fifth straight loss for Oregon at the time.

Oregon managed to get its offense going again in a 3-2 comeback defeat over Weber State on Sunday. And the victory was the confidence booster the Ducks needed heading into Pacific-10 Conference play.

"We're feeling really good going into it," Ashcraft said. "It's going to be a good test for us to play against a really strong team. We're really excited. We're starting from scratch again."

It isn't just the Civil War for Oregon, it is the beginning of conference play. It has become vital in the eyes of the Ducks to prove to themselves that they can win in one of the toughest

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